

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47) today voted to strengthen cybersecurity in both the public and private sectors. H.R. 4061, the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act, would require U.S. government and security agencies to develop a strategic cybersecurity plan to address potential threats and implement concrete research and development (R&D) goals. Additionally, a Rep. Sanchez-sponsored amendment would strengthen public-private partnerships in cybersecurity to ensure all parties are aware of emerging threats and have a voice in improving new technologies.

"Securing our nation's cyber networks against potential threats is one of the greatest security challenges we currently face," said Rep. Sanchez. "There is a real, growing threat of hackers and other cyber criminals accessing sensitive information and disrupting services on the Web. This and other unconventional threats will require unconventional solutions."

"In order to effectively protect our networks from these attacks, we need to encourage greater coordination and information sharing between cyber experts in the public and private sectors. My amendment will take concrete steps to strengthen these partnerships at the same time we are developing a plan to secure the U.S. against a new generation of cyber threats."

The Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2009 is designed to enact many of the key recommendations of the 2009 Cybersecurity Policy Review, a 60-day assessment of cyberspace policies across various federal agencies. Some of the recommendations codified in the bill include: the development of a strategic plan for secure, reliable, and resilient networking and information technology systems; increasing public awareness of the threats facing the nation's cyber networks; expanding and training the federal government's cybersecurity workforce; and increasing interagency coordination on cybersecurity issues.

Before the House voted to pass the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act, Rep. Sanchez delivered the following statement in support of her amendment and the bill in general:

"The challenge of defending our nation on a constantly expanding cyber front continues to grow. As Vice-Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee and Chairwoman of the Armed Services subcommittee that oversees part of the Department of Defense cyber mission, I have constantly tried to improve how we address the need for next generation technology and personnel to defend our country against this 21st century cyber threat. The underlying legislation

is an important step towards enhancing our nation's cybersecurity efforts.

"I have been a strong supporter of engaging the private sector in cybersecurity issues, especially when it comes to securing critical cyber infrastructure. To this end the amendment I am offering today would strengthen two existing provisions in the bill to further enhance the cybersecurity dialogue between the public and private sectors.

"My amendment would add language to help facilitate access to realistic threats and vulnerabilities for academic researchers during the development of the strategic plan in section 103. In addition the amendment will strengthen section 108 by ensuring that the University-Industry Taskforce will propose guidelines for the private sector to provide feedback to the public sector on the effectiveness of new technologies.

"This sharing of 'lessons learned' will help us improve critical cybersecurity technologies. I urge my colleagues to support this amendment and the underlying legislation."

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